

Passaic River Superfund Community Advisory Group Summary and Action Items from the Thursday April 19, 2012 Monthly Meeting

DRAFTY, May 1, 2012

Agenda Items

- Project Updates and Discussion
- Update on River Mile 10.9 Removal and Pilot Projects
- CAG Request for Technical Support
- General River Communication Activities, Messaging

Project Updates and Discussion

- The phase 1 removal project is going well, it is on time and will be completed on schedule. The first 6 feet of dredging is complete and now moving to the more heavily contaminated materials at 6 to 12 feet.
- Perimeter air monitoring results are showing contaminant concentrations that are orders of magnitude below levels of concern. Brought in an EPA on scene coordinator (OSC) that has a lot of experience in perimeter air monitoring. The new OSC has brought in about a dozen additional monitors, these monitors are gps enabled and beam results directly to a laptop.
- The CAG asked whether dredging of the more contaminated materials will affect the air monitoring process. While it should not make a difference, the project will repeat the more frequent sampling done at the beginning to make sure there are still no unacceptable levels of contamination. A full week of full contamination monitoring will be conducted, then frequency will step down based on results.
- All the JTI workers are working hard and doing great.
- Visit passaicremovalaction.com to get real-time data, ongoing information, and weekly progress reports,
- The CAG asked if all of the air quality data going to be put online. No, but it is public information. The EPA will explore get it posted, to date it is basically all non-detect.
- Distributed fact sheet on the removal action, used at the March public meeting, held in both Spanish and English. There was a relatively low turnout, probably a reflection that things are going well. The ICC helped with getting the word out.
- EPA is requesting availability for a CAG tour of the site any time on May 16th and late on the 17th. Please respond to the request when received.
- The CAG asked about the status of the Phase 2 removal, which includes 160,000 yd³ of contaminated sediment scheduled for disposal in a CDF in Newark Bay. EPA is now reconsidering that based on the lack of support for a CDF. As of right now there is a specific order to put it into the CDF, and that is very unlikely to happen. EPA will need to reengage with Tiera on possible options. There may be some options that were not available three years ago. EPA does not want to move forward with hard and fast plans without engaging everyone in that discussion. The CAG agreed that this needs to be a discussion at a future CAG

meeting.

- The CAG noted that everything is hinged on everything else, it's the same questions for all segments: what do you do with it, where do you put it? EPA agreed but noted that there is a difference of scale. It is not likely that actions at 10.9 will have any impact on the Phase 2 removal. 10.9 could end up being as little as 16,000 yd³, and we need to get that material out of the river on a quicker timeline than it will take to have results of the technology pilot studies.

ACTION ITEMS

- EPA will identify whether the air monitoring data can be posted on line.
- Phase 2 removal project needs to be included for discussion at a future CAG meeting

Update on River Mile 10.9 Removal and Pilot Projects

- EPA is well along negotiating an administrative order on consent with CPG, the basic agreements on technical and legal issues are in place. The CPG is now organizing around how to allocate funding among its members. CPG asked for 30 more days to figure this out, as this higher level of dioxin upstream has changed things for them and they need to figure this out among themselves. EPA granted the extension, recognizing that all of this has been happening on a very short timeframe. The CPG has agreed to start some activities under a faster agreement to collect some additional data and put together a quality assurance plan, collect materials to start bench-scale studies.
- With regard to the status of the lower eight mile FFS, EPA originally thought that there would be information by now to have this conversation, but it is not really possible at this point to judge whether or not the data that will be generated at 10.9 is worth delaying the FFS.
- CPG will start with bench scale tests with a small volume of material (a few drums), those tests will be reported to EPA/CPG to determine which if any to move forward to full scale pilot projects. So at this point the FFS is moving forward and on schedule for the end of the year unless the bench scale study results suggest the value in a delay.
- Right now, the removal action at 10.9 is likely to happen in the spring of 2013, and will happen regardless of the results of bench scale effort, doing the bench scale tests,
- The CAG asked whether these bench scales are not just a repeat of what was done already. No, there is now a lot more experience and knowledge to guide these tests and use the results.
- Does this mean that the CPG members are admitting liability and allocating costs? No, they are not admitting liability but they are allocating costs and that will set precedent for them on future expenses.
- Do we really think another month will get this sorted out? That was the CPG self-imposed deadline, they believe they can get there and they do need the time to sort this out. Overall, EPA believes that the project will not lose any real time.
- How much material will be removed? Approximately two feet or so of material will provide enough room for a cap to be placed to control movement of this

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material. This would result in 15 to 20,000 yd³ of removal. This will not remove all the material, but the focus is on isolating this material from the environment. Being handled as a "removal" response to act quickly. Main focus is environmental risk, not an acute human health risk. Planning for the project includes many details and takes a long time, no way it could all get done for this construction season.

- Will it effectively shut down the park while the work is going on? Possibly, all that will need to be worked out.
- What about the other mudflats upstream, what is the plan for additional emergencies? There are almost certain to be more spots with similar contamination? We are working on that, finished the investigation of some additional areas, data is starting to come in. No sense yet of what the data looks like.
- The CAG would like to accelerate knowledge of the river, there are other sites as bad or worse than 10.9. We have just begun to touch the surface at this point. EPA responded that the CPG is working its way up the river and that is how this area was discovered. Have done data all the way up to river mile 17.4 and now going back to look at areas that appear to be concerns and filling in the gaps. Most of the data should be in and validated at the end of May.
- Does the EPA intend to get their experts reviewing the bench scale results and pilot results? The CAG is concerned about the quality of the work itself and how it will all be reviewed. EPA responded that all of this work is voluntary, EPA will not dictate whether or not to proceed with pilot study, but it will be conducted under EPA order if it does happen. EPA will ask for a full evaluation report of the results of the bench scale studies. EPA would bring in the appropriate folks from different parts of the government to review all results.
- EPA is planning an informal meeting in Lyndhurst in June to discuss this information, to have an opportunity to have a meeting before any agreement is signed. Have talked to some folks who walk their dogs and talked to a number of boaters and users on the river to understand their habits and use of the river

ACTION ITEMS

- Any suggestions for outreach on the May public meeting should be forward to David Kluesner.

CAG Request for Technical Support

- The CAG reviewed its draft request for technical support under the EPA TASC program.
- EPA's technical assistance grant program (TAG) is limited to one grant per site and the TAG grant on the Passaic River is held by the Passaic River Coalition.
- EPA's TASC support program is another way to get technical support to communities to supplement TAG activities. Under the TASC program, the community asks EPA for support (Wanda Ayala is the Region 2 TASC coordinator). It is important to craft a good request, the better the request, the better the outcome and the more closely that EPA will meet the needs of the

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community. Once the request is received, EPA gives it to its contractor, Skeo, who will seek to provide someone on their staff or on their national roster.

- Once a request is put in, it takes time to process and identify the appropriate support.
- Is there a template for the request? No.
- EPA noted that the CAG probably needed some clarification on the reports it has identified to review, want to make sure that they will result in a good outcome, these identified may not be the right set of reports. It is important to make sure that you have a good set of documents.
- The TASC support will ultimately get funded from a special account set up with the PRPs. There is no set ceiling, but it does make the specificity of the request more important.
- PRC has done a review of most of the reports listed in the draft CAG request, has provided a report to EPA in December with a review of these, the CAG should take a look at this work. The CAG agreed.
- The request could be organized into two phases, starting with an assessment to help decide the full scope of support needed.
- It also may be that more than one expert will be needed, an overall generalist on sediment cleanups plus experts on items such as treatment technology and air.
- To be ready for the proposed plan by the end of 2012, the CAG would need to get someone on board this summer.
- It is possible that the decontamination options do not work out and will need to look back at disposal options, disposal will be needed at some level regardless of the technology used.
- The CAG request needs to clarify its priorities—identify the goals and objectives that the CAG wants to consider in the expert review, how the technology meets the CAGs community objectives.

ACTION ITEMS

- EPA or the PRC will provide the TAG report identified
- The CAG will review the TAG Report on Dredged Materials Management.
- EPA will provide a successful TASC request to the CAG as an example
- The CAG will produce a more focused and near-final version of the request ready for the next CAG meeting

General River Communication Activities, Messaging

- The CAG has a Facebook page up and running, though it is still a work in progress. Called Saving Our Passaic River. The purpose is to provide a tool for community members on Facebook to go to get basic information, know what is happening right now, news, progress reports, and a place for folks to ask questions. Lots of folks coming on are not in the Lister Ave area--seeing folks from Lyndhurst and other areas upriver. They are hungry for information. On the page itself, present about some common sense things to do in the mudflats to

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ensure people are not ingesting contamination or tracking it home. Looking to put some very quick facts at the top. The next step is to connect all members of the CAG to like the page, it is also linked to EPA Region 2 page and gets their feeds, and also linked to Baykeepers,

- EPA working on a lot of initiatives, spent a lot of time over the past year gearing up on the removal project, now moving focus to RM10.9. On May 8 or 9, EPA will be having meetings in Lyndhurst, informal dialogue, presenting the risks. Planning both afternoon and evening sessions. Seeking to do a lot of outreach and communication is ongoing.
- The CAG remarked that we need to get the message out to people who fish on the river that the fish are not just dirty, washing the fish will not remove the danger.
- NJDEP and EPA have a monthly call, note that additional areas similar to 10.9 are likely and this is an ongoing activity where we will need to focus communication.

ACTION ITEMS

- Send Lenny Thomas the names of any people that you would like invited to join the Facebook page in an excel file and he will send out an invitation.
- Offer any suggestions for improvements to the Facebook page to Lenny.
- Send EPA any information on users and contacts to help them understand what is going on at river mile 10.9.
- The Communication committee will send some specific recommendations to David Kluesner on simple messages, signage, audiences for communicating risks and simple procedures at RM 10.9. Anyone who has specific ideas please send thoughts and ideas to Lenny.

Next Meeting

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Meeting Topics

Ongoing updates

PRC Report

Finalize TASC request